

Morphology:

Lexical category

Linguistics 200

Spring 2006

Lexical category

- = ‘part of speech’, ‘grammatical category’
- What are the lexical categories?
 - of a given language?
 - across languages?
- Why this is important in linguistics
 - Words of different lexical categories have different properties
 - Can combine with certain affixes (e.g.) to form words
 - Can combine with certain words (e.g.) to form sentences
 - (Imagine a dictionary which didn’t include lexical category)

Determining lexical category

- Morphological tests: what kinds of bound morphemes can be added to morphemes in category X?
- Syntactic tests: what kinds of words can words in category X combine with?
- Typical description of lexical categories
 - nouns: X, Y, Z characteristics (in lg. P)
 - verbs: A, B, C characteristics (in lg. Q)
 - adjectives: ...
 - ...

Verbs

- Meanings: typically denote actions, events, states
 - But meaning is not always a reliable guide
 - ‘hungry’ is an adjective in English
 - ?anáwi ‘be hungry’ is a verb in Sahaptin
- Some Sahaptin verbs
 - sínwi ‘talk’
 - pajúwi ‘be sick, hurt’
 - káam ‘miss’
 - pnú ‘sleep’

Characteristics of Sahaptin verbs

- Can be affixed with tense/aspect suffixes
 - –ša imperfective (unless irregular)
 - -(n)χa habitual
 - -ta future
- Can be affixed with person/number affixes
 - ?i- 3sg
 - pa- 3pl
 - -k 2sg imperative, etc.

Question (part 1)

- Think of a language (other than English) that you know or have studied. List one verb and explain why you think it is a verb.

Nouns

- Typically refer to objects, classes of objects, concepts
- Some Sahaptin nouns
 - ʔáʔa ‘crow’
 - ʔiwínš ‘man’
 - tiináwit ‘culture, tradition’
 - hulí ‘wind’ (also a verb, ‘be windy’)
- Morphological test
 - cannot be affixed with tense/aspect suffixes
- Syntactic test (‘frame’) for nouns
 - ____ verb or verb ____
 - ʔipnúša ‘he’s sleeping’
 - ʔipnúša ʔiwínš *or* ʔiwínš ʔipnúša ‘the man is sleeping’

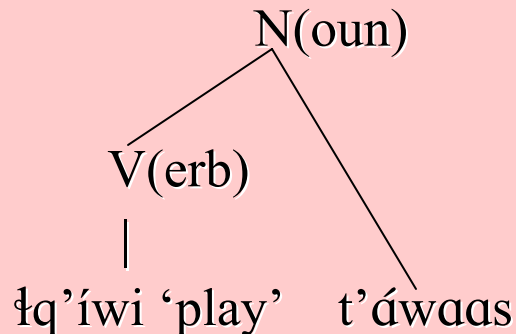
A noun-forming affix

- Some affixes change lexical category ('category-changing')

- E.g. $-/t'\acute{a}waas/$ *instrument*: $]_V __]_N$

("attaches to verbs, forms nouns")

$[[\text{ɬq}'\acute{i}wi]_V t'\acute{a}waas]_N$



Phonology applies to word after morphemes joined together:

$[\text{ɬq}'\acute{i}wit'\acute{a}waas]$ 'toy'

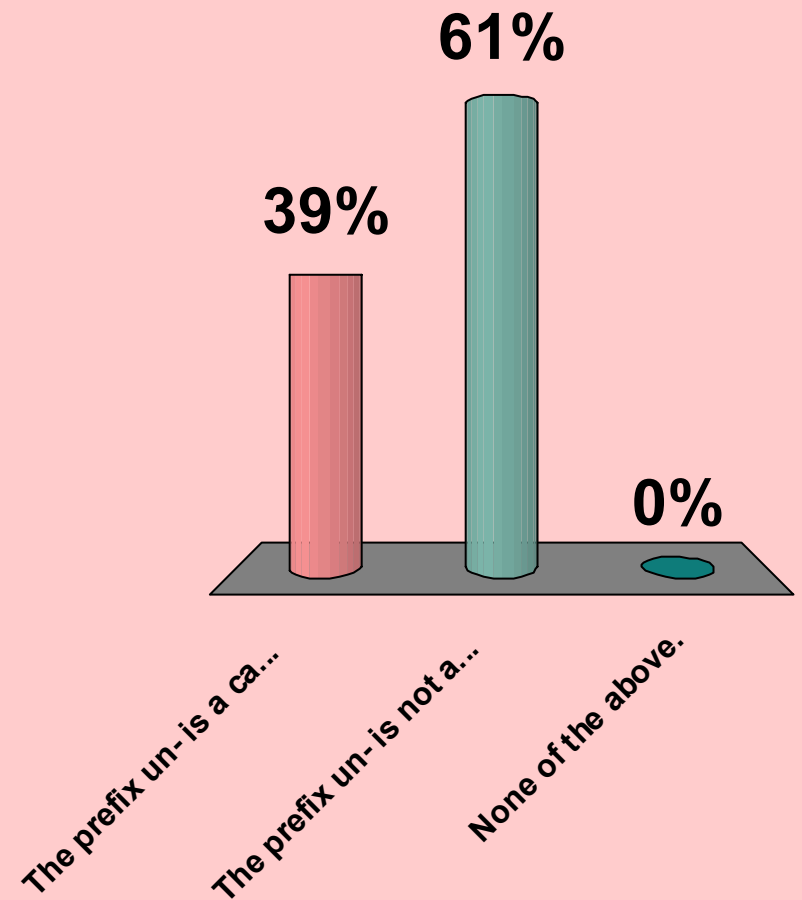
- Properly speaking, $-/t'\acute{a}waas/$ does not cause $/\text{ɬq}'\acute{i}wi/$ to change category from verb to noun. Rather, $-/t'\acute{a}waas/$ specifies that the word containing the morpheme $/\text{ɬq}'\acute{i}wi/_{\text{V}}$ is a noun.

A verb forming affix

- -i ‘do with N’:]_N ____]_V
 - táatpas ‘shirt, dress’ (noun)
 - táatpasi ‘wear, put on shirt, dress’ (verb)
 - táatpasik ‘put on your shirt’ (-k 2sg imperative)
 - ?ajn ‘iron’ (noun)
 - ?ájni ‘iron, press’ (verb)
 - ?ájnik ‘iron it’

In *unloosen*,

1. The prefix *un-* is a category changing prefix.
- 2. The prefix *un-* is not a category changing prefix.
3. None of the above.



More morphological properties of Sahaptin nouns

- Cannot occur with verb affixes
- Can occur with case suffixes (next week)
- Nouns have dual and plural forms, but 2 types of nouns
 - Animate, independently mobile
 - *-in* dual, *-ma* plural
 - Inanimate or immobile
 - dual/plural formed via *reduplication*

Animate nouns

- Animate and independently mobile nouns
- Form plurals with *-ma*
 - ?á?ɑ ‘crow’, ?á?ama ‘crows’
 - ?ɑp’úus ‘cat’, ?ɑp’úusma ‘cats’
 - ?ájat ‘woman’, ?ájatma ‘women’
 - łč’áč’a ‘ghost’, łč’áč’ama ‘ghosts’

Inanimate nouns

- Actually, inanimate or not independently mobile
- Form plural via *reduplication* (a way of classifying morphemes by form)
 - a reduplicative morpheme copies the phonological segments of the root attached to
 - partial reduplication (affixational) vs. total reduplication (compounding)

Reduplication in English

- A type of compounding
- ‘real, true’
 - red red (vs. blue red)
 - home home
 - tea tea

Plurals

■ Inanimate nouns

- pšwá ‘rock’, pšwápšwa ‘rocks’
- ʔitít ‘tooth’, ʔitítʔitit ‘teeth’
- wála ‘creek’, walawála ‘creeks’ (Walla Walla)

■ Immobile animate nouns (e.g. plants)

- latít ‘flower’, latítlatit ‘flowers’

Adjectives

- Have dual and plural forms, like nouns
- Morphological test
 - ____-tχaw ‘more/most’
 - timná ‘heart’ (noun); *timnátχaw
 - timnáji ‘nice’ (‘heart’-*adj*) (adj); timnájitχaw ‘nicer, nicest’
- Syntactic test
 - páju ‘very’ ____
 - páju timnáji ‘very nice’
 - *páju timná (‘very heart’)

Verbs vs. adjectives

- ?átaw ‘valuable, important’ (adjective)
 - ?átaw iwá ‘it’s valuable’
 - *?i?átawša
 - (?átawi ‘love, like, value’ (verb)
 - ?i?átawiša ‘he likes...’)
- ?anáwi ‘be hungry’ (verb)
 - ?i?anáwiša ‘he’s hungry’
 - *?anáwi iwá

Summary

- Sahaptin lexical categories include noun, verb, adjective
- Used in different syntactic and morphological contexts
- Subcategories of lexical categories may also need to be distinguished; may have different morphological or syntactic characteristics
- Change in lexical category can be accomplished with the addition of certain affixes

Question (part 2)

- In the language (other than English) that you know or have studied, list one noun and explain why you think it is a noun and not a verb.